

34



KODANSHA COMICS

HIROAKI SAMURA

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Chapter

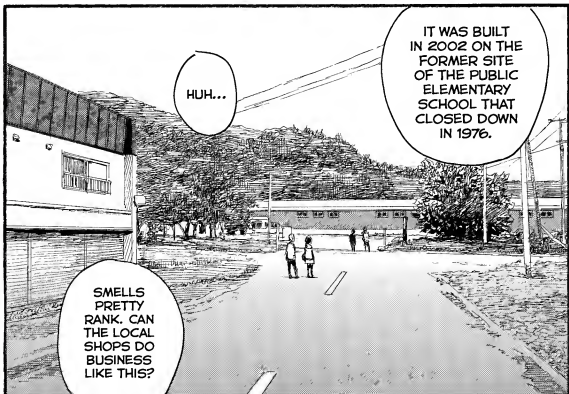
3

I DON'T WANT TO BE FOOLED!

Wave
LISTEN TO ME!



THIS IS
THE WASTE
DISPOSAL
PLANT.



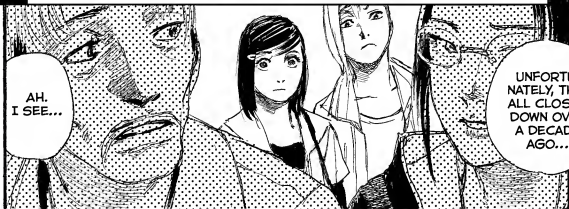
HUH...

IT WAS BUILT
IN 2002 ON THE
FORMER SITE
OF THE PUBLIC
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL THAT
CLOSED DOWN
IN 1976.

SMELLS
PRETTY
RANK. CAN
THE LOCAL
SHOPS DO
BUSINESS
LIKE THIS?

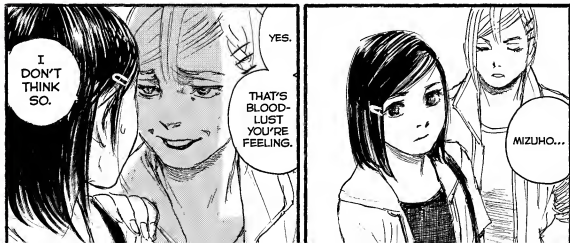
THE
STORY
SO
FAR

UNDER FM STATION WORKER MATO'S GUIDANCE, MINARE KODA HAS MADE HER DEBUT AS A RADIO DJ, AND MANAGES TO GET BY ONE SHOW AT A TIME. MEANWHILE, SCRIPT WRITER KUREKO MOVES TO MAKE A CAREER SHIFT AND BEGINS PLANNING A TRIP TO GATHER MATERIAL FOR A NEW BOOK, TO WHICH MATO ORDERS KUREKO'S SECRET ADMIRER, MIZUHO, AND MINARE, TO ACCOMPANY HIM ON. AND WHO AWAITS THEM AT WASSAMU, BUT A BUXOM TOUR GUIDE.



AH.
I SEE...

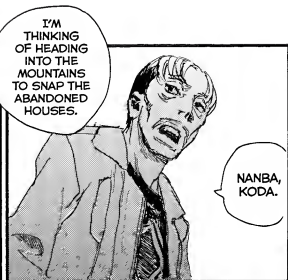
UNFORTU-
NATELY, THEY
ALL CLOSED
DOWN OVER
A DECADE
AGO...





O-KAY!

BRING
ALONG
THE RE-
CORDING
EQUIPMENT
IF YOU
WANT.

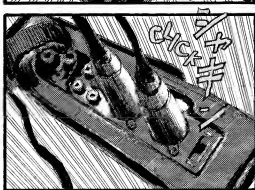


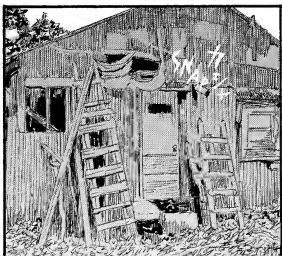
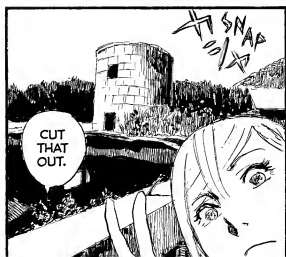
I'M
THINKING
OF HEADING
INTO THE
MOUNTAINS
TO SNAP THE
ABANDONED
HOUSES.

NANBA,
KODA.



WHAT IS
THIS, AN
OLYMPIAN
MEDIA
SCRUM?







WHAT
DID THEY
GROW?

POTATOES,
EDIBLE CHRYS-
ANTHEMUM,
CAULIFLOWER.
STUFF LIKE
THAT.

DEVELOPMENT
OF THE TOWA
DISTRICT
BEGAN IN
1907,

WHILE
THE TORYO
DISTRICT WAS
DEVELOPED
AFTER WORLD
WAR II. THE
VILLAGE WAS
BUILT TO
COMBAT THE
RISK OF
A FOOD
SHORTAGE.



WHAT'S
WRONG,
MINARE-
SAN?



ONLY
THREE
FAMILIES IN
TOWA. TORYO
IS NOW CATE-
GORIZED AS
AN ABANDONED
VILLAGE.

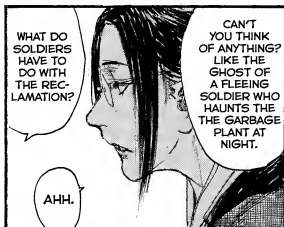
ABOUT
HOW MANY
PEOPLE
ARE STILL
LIVING
HERE?



ARE THERE
ANY GHOST
STORIES
FROM AROUND
THESE PARTS,
HOKAKUSHI-
SAN?

?

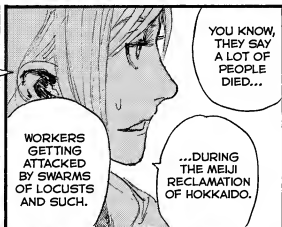
HUH?



WHAT DO
SOLDIERS
HAVE TO
DO WITH
THE REC-
LAMATION?

CAN'T
YOU THINK
OF ANYTHING?
LIKE THE
GHOST OF
A FLEEING
SOLDIER WHO
HAUNTS THE
THE GARBAGE
PLANT AT
NIGHT.

AHH.



YOU KNOW,
THEY SAY
A LOT OF
PEOPLE
DIED...

WORKERS
GETTING
ATTACKED
BY SWARMS
OF LOCUSTS
AND SUCH.

...DURING
THE MEIJI
RECLAMATION
OF HOKKAIDO.

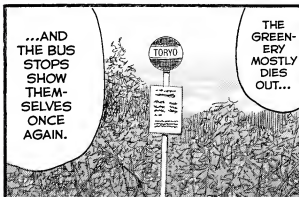
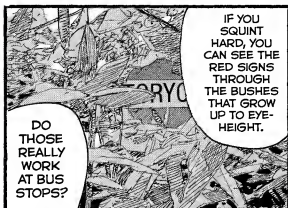
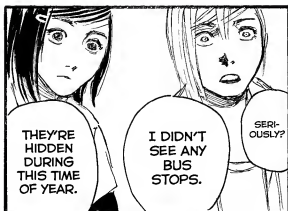


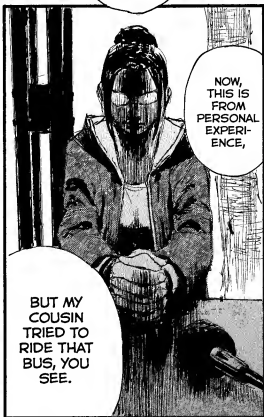
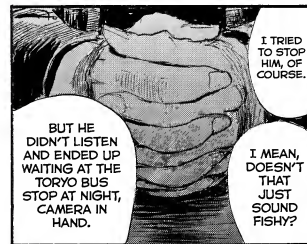
WHY ARE
YOU TRYING
TO START
SOMETHING?

DON'T YOU
THINK THAT'S
PUSHING IT?

URBAN?!

WELL,
THERE IS
AN URBAN
LEGEND
CALLED "THE
NOVEMBER
BUS STOP."







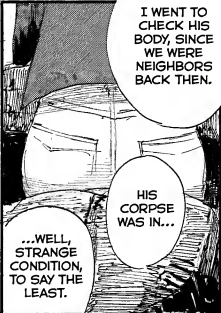
I MIGHT
NEVER BE
ABLE TO EAT
CAULIFLOWER
AGAIN.

TELL
ME HOW
HIS BODY
LOOKED!

WAIT,
WHY?!



...I...



I WENT TO
CHECK HIS
BODY, SINCE
WE WERE
NEIGHBORS
BACK THEN.

HIS
CORPSE
WAS IN...

...WELL,
STRANGE
CONDITION,
TO SAY THE
LEAST.



LET ME
TELL YOU
ABOUT A
SOMETHING
SPOOKY
I EXPERI-
ENCED JUST
YESTERDAY.

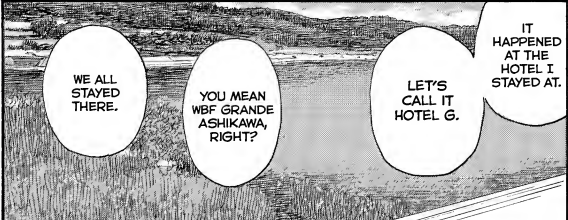
ALL
RIGHT,
THEN.



I'M SERIOUSLY
GONNA TWIST
YOUR NIPPLES
OFF, LADY!

WELL,
I JUST
MADE UP
THE WHOLE
THING,
THOUGH.

SHE'S
GOOD...

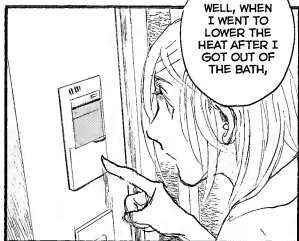


WE ALL
STAYED
THERE.

YOU MEAN
WBF GRANDE
ASHIKAWA,
RIGHT?

LET'S
CALL IT
HOTEL G.

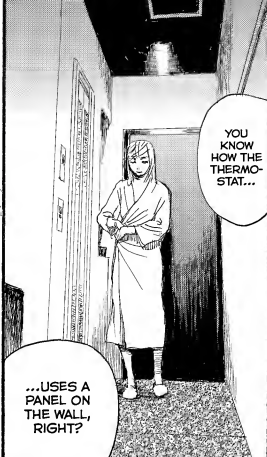
IT
HAPPENED
AT THE
HOTEL I
STAYED AT.



WELL, WHEN
I WENT TO
LOWER THE
HEAT AFTER I
GOT OUT OF
THE BATH,

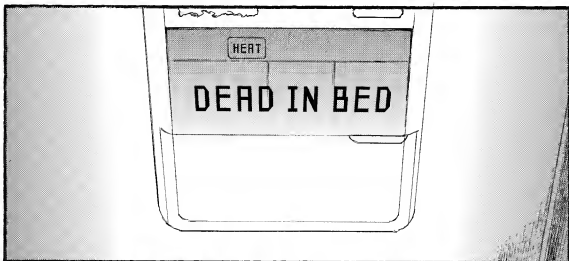


ON
THE LCD
DISPLAY...



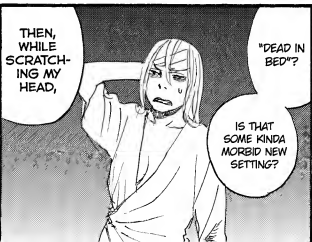
YOU
KNOW
HOW THE THERMO-
STAT...

...USES A
PANEL ON
THE WALL,
RIGHT?



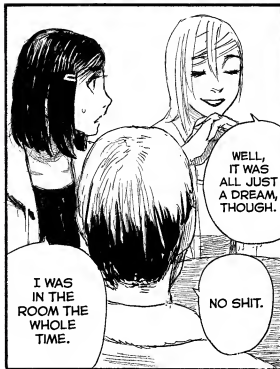
I LOOKED
OVER TO THE
BED, AND
WHAT DO
I SEE?

THEN,
WHILE
SCRATCH-
ING MY
HEAD,



"DEAD IN
BED"?

IS THAT
SOME KINDA
MORBID NEW
SETTING?



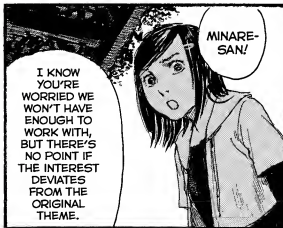
*SANSHIRO: A JAPANESE COMEDY DUO.



WHAT
WERE YOU
EXPECTING?

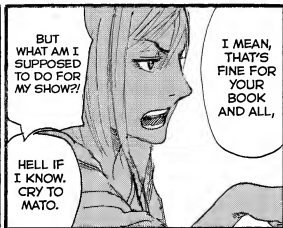
BUT Y'KNOW,
GATHERING
MATERIAL ON
DEPOPULATED
VILLAGES IS
PROVING TO
BE MORE
BORING THAN
I IMAGINED.

I'M NOT
SURE HOW
MUCH FOOTAGE
WE'LL BE ABLE
TO USE.



I KNOW
YOU'RE
WORRIED WE
WON'T HAVE
ENOUGH TO
WORK WITH,
BUT THERE'S
NO POINT IF
THE INTEREST
DEVIATES
FROM THE
ORIGINAL
THEME.

MINARE-
SAN!



BUT
WHAT AM I
SUPPOSED
TO DO FOR
MY SHOW?!

I MEAN,
THAT'S
FINE FOR
YOUR
BOOK
AND ALL,

HELL IF
I KNOW.
CRY TO
MATO.



AS
SOON AS
I STARTED
TALKING, I
THOUGHT,
"DO ANY
SHOWS LIKE
THAT EXIST?"

HONESTLY,
YES...

DON'T
YOU
THINK
YOU'RE
ASKING
FOR A BIT
MUCH?

MIZUHO...



EVEN
IF WE'RE IN
AN UNDER-
POPULATED
REGION WITH-
OUT ANY SIGNS
OF LIFE AND
NO ACCESS
TO VIDEO,

ISN'T
THAT WHAT
MAKES TOP-
CLASS RADIO
JOURNALISM?!

WE HAVE
TO MAKE
A REPORT
THAT'LL
ENTICE THE
LISTENERS
USING ONLY
AUDIO!



AFTER ALL,
DON'T RADIO
LISTENERS...

...USUALLY
HOPE THAT
THE HOST
WILL GO OFF
THE RAILS
EVENTUALLY?

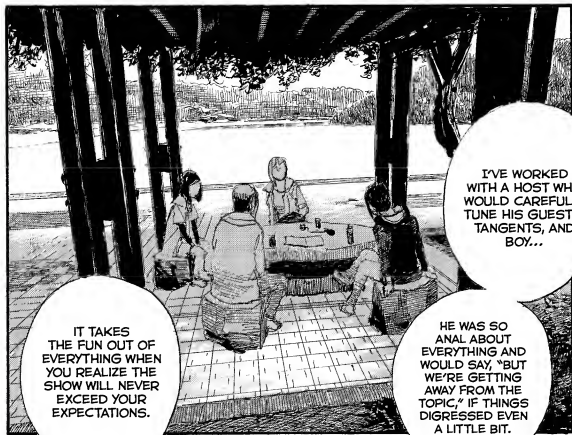


BY
STARTING
WITH A GHOST
STORY ABOUT
WASSAMU,

YOU CAN SET
A PRETEXT TO
TRANSITION
INTO YOUR
OWN STORY.



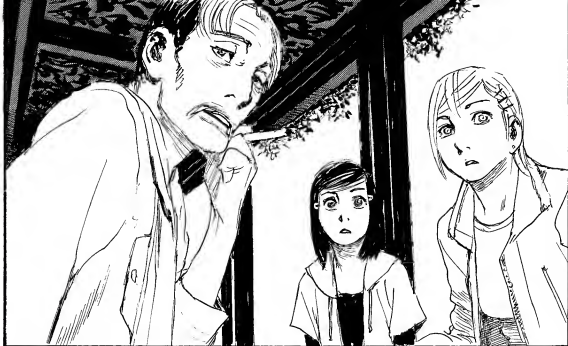
I THINK
IT'S A
DECENT
IDEA.



IT TAKES
THE FUN OUT OF
EVERYTHING WHEN
YOU REALIZE THE
SHOW WILL NEVER
EXCEED YOUR
EXPECTATIONS.

I'VE WORKED
WITH A HOST WHO
WOULD CAREFULLY
TUNE HIS GUESTS'
TANGENTS, AND
BOY...

HE WAS SO
ANAL ABOUT
EVERYTHING AND
WOULD SAY, "BUT
WE'RE GETTING
AWAY FROM THE
TOPIC," IF THINGS
DIGRESSED EVEN
A LITTLE BIT.



...WAS BECAUSE I HOPED TO BUILD A WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH MRS.

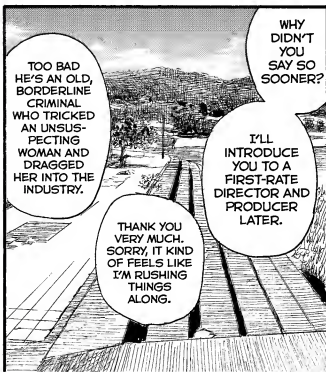
ADMITTEDLY, THE REASON I ACCEPTED THIS JOB...



...DO YOU WORK IN BROADCASTING?

YES. I'M THE HEAD OF PR AT OUR COMPANY.

I'VE HAD THE PLEASURE OF WORKING WITH MANY MEDIA OUTLETS.



TOO BAD HE'S AN OLD, BORDERLINE CRIMINAL WHO TRICKED AN UNSUSPECTING WOMAN AND DRAGGED HER INTO THE INDUSTRY.

WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO SOONER?

I'LL INTRODUCE YOU TO A FIRST-RATE DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER LATER.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH. SORRY, IT KIND OF FEELS LIKE I'M RUSHING THINGS ALONG.



OH!

OH, YEAH.
AS I WAS
SAYING...

I THINK IT'S
A SIGN YOU'RE SO
ROTTEN THAT EVEN
IN THE EVENT OF
AN INCIDENT, YOU'D
WANT SOMEONE
TO TAKE THE FALL
FOR YOU AND
PROTECT YOU
UNCONDITIONALLY.

AFTER I
FOUND THE
BODY, KAKURYU*
BURST INTO
THE ROOM AND
TOOK ME IN HIS
ARMS. WHAT DO
YOU MAKE OF
THIS? THINK IT'S
SOME KIND OF
OMEN?

*KAKURYU RIKISABURO: MINARE'S SUMO CRUSH



OH,
YEAH?

KUREKO-
SAN.
ABOUT
THE
INTER-
VIEW.

HE'S
WONDERING
IF YOU'RE
FREE TO TALK
NOW. WHAT
DO YOU SAY?

MY FATHER
SAYS HE'D
LOVE TO TELL
YOU ABOUT
OLD
WASSAMU.

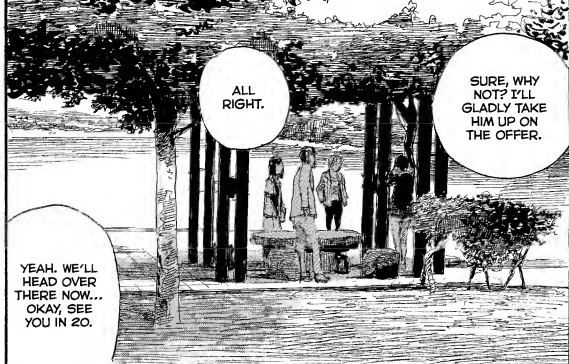
YES, IT'S
JUST LIKE
IN THE
VOICEMAIL
I LEFT.

...OH,
REALLY?
AWESOME.

WHAT
DO YOU
THINK? DOES
TOMORROW
WORK? OH,
YOU'RE
FREE?

YES?

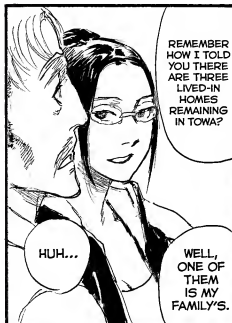
AH, YES.
THAT'S
RIGHT.



ALL RIGHT.

SURE, WHY NOT? I'LL GLADLY TAKE HIM UP ON THE OFFER.

YEAH. WE'LL HEAD OVER THERE NOW... OKAY, SEE YOU IN 20.



REMEMBER HOW I TOLD YOU THERE ARE THREE LIVED-IN HOMES REMAINING IN TOWA?

HUH...

WELL, ONE OF THEM IS MY FAMILY'S.



SORRY, WE HAVE TO HIKE FROM HERE.

OH, NO WORRIES.

HE LIVES PRETTY DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS, HUH?



I GOTTA TELL YOU, MIZUHO. I'M BAFFLED.



IN MY
HEAD, IT'S UP
THERE WITH
THE MYSTERY
OF THE MAN
IN THE IRON
MASK.

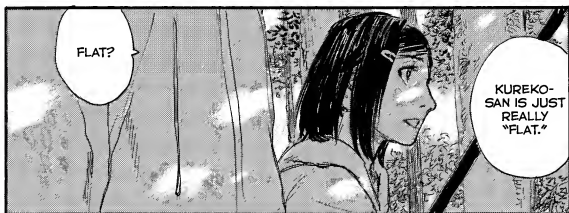
THE
WORLD'S
FULL OF
MYSTERIES,

I CAN
SEE WHY
HE WOULD
BE.

ONE
OF THEM
BEING THAT
KUREKO-SAN
IS SOMEHOW
POPULAR
WITH THE
LADIES.

WELL,
SURE,
YOU
CAN...

Are we
really gonna
need the
shotgun
mics



FLAT?

KUREKO-
SAN IS JUST
REALLY
"FLAT."



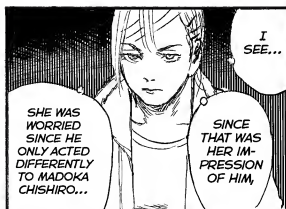
I MEAN,
IT'S MY
FAULT
PEOPLE
TAKE ME
LIGHTLY,
BUT DON'T
YOU THINK
THAT'S
FRUS-
TRATING?

THEY
GET
TAKEN
LIGHTLY,
HIT ON...



BUT IT FEELS
LIKE YOUNG
FEMALE
EMPLOYEES
TEND TO GET
TREATED A
LOT MORE
DELICATELY
THAN THEIR
MALE CO-
WORKERS.

I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
IT'S LIKE
AT OTHER
STATIONS,





I THOUGHT
IT WAS
SOME KINDA
FACILITY.

THAT'S MY
HOUSE.

REALLY?
IT'S HUGE.

